

The Shadow land by Pififtyone

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Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Original Male Character(s), Steve Harrington

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Summary:

A year ago darkness broke out into our world, spilling out into our world. Now, a year after the event, a dark plan is set in motion to expand the dark zone and take control of the rest of the Earth.

1. The Spark

Summary for the Chapter:

A chance encounter sets in motion a chain of events, while dark forces begin to gather.

The Spark

I awake to the sound of screams and the thumping of feet on concrete as people run; somewhere near there is a high pitch howl as the daemons give chase to the fleeing crowd. I jump up and grab the bag that I had been sleeping on, reaching inside and pulling out a revolver and check the chamber. Grabbing the bag, I quickly run off in the opposite direction from the screams. I'm not a hero, I'm a survivor and I know that those people are already dead, the daemons are just using them to bait in any would be heroes; I dart off into the undergrowth nearby, leaving the abandoned building in my wake. I keep running until I can't hear the screams of the people or the howls of the daemons. I'm just a survivor, someone else trying to get by in the world which now exists. A year ago the darkness just erupted out of nowhere, starting small like a cloud, but soon it built into a storm, covering a vast area of land. Then one day it suddenly stopped, as if savouring the meal it was making out of the United States; the whole world stood still in shock, even the Soviet Union pledge to try and help end this darkness. The UN set up a blockade around the 'Dark Zone' as they called it, all those who were trapped inside remained inside and were left to survive the hell that followed. The daemons arrived about half a year ago, snatching and dragging away anyone could get their claws on, pulling them off to the centre of the Dark Zone; I stick near the blockade, the daemons never venture too near to the blockade, but the UN soldiers have orders to shoot-on-sight, I've learnt that the hard way. No help is coming, everyone here is on their own and it is only a matter of time before the daemons get all of us.

From behind me, I hear a whine and spin as a daemon slowly walks out of a bush about fifty feet away. It hasn't spotted me yet, its head is low to the ground as if it is tracking my scent; the daemons usually hunt in packs, so the others can't be far away. I slowly cocked my

revolver. I don't like using it, I mostly just use it to scare away other people, I've never actually had to fire it before. The daemon turns its head towards me and snarls, its face unravels and it shows a maw full of needle-like teeth. It charges me. I try to raise my revolver, but the daemon is too fast and it tackles me, knocking me down and landing on top of me. Just as it is about to take a chunk out of my face, a figure runs out of the undergrowth and hits it with something, sending the daemon to sprawling. I back away from it quickly, but it isn't interested in me anymore, instead its attention is focused on the stranger who just saved me. It limps as it moves now and I can see blood slowly dripping from one of its sides, leaving a trail where it walks; it slowly circles us, seemingly studying us. I feel my hand tighten around the grip of my revolver. The daemon charges, moving so fast it is almost a blur, leaping at me again, claws extended. But this time I'm ready, raising my gun and firing point blank into its chest, the force of the impact stopping it in just before it reaches me, crashing to the floor. I level my revolver at it and wait, making sure that it won't get up again. It doesn't.

I turn to look at the stranger. But he is not looking at me, instead he is looking at the direction he came from like he is expecting someone else to come from that direction. Suddenly a girl bursts out of the bushes, a rifle in her arms. She looks at the stranger, then at the daemon and finally at me, never lowering the rifle. "Jesus Steve, what the hell happened?" She asked, still staring at me. The stranger, Steve, just shrugged and said "I saw someone that needed help. What the hell was I supposed to do Nancy, leave them?" The girl, Nancy, huffed and lowered the rifle slightly, still not taking her eyes off me. "Sure, but who the hell fired the gun?" She asked. I raised the pistol slightly, showing it to Nancy, who looked a little shocked at me holding a gun. "Well then, we should head back to camp then Steve, before anymore demodogs come along." Nancy said, turning to look at Steve again. "What about him?" Steve asked, "I mean we can't just leave him alone can we?" Both of them now turn to look at me, studying me for a few minutes; I don't mind surviving by myself but even I must admit that there is safety in numbers, sometimes groups only drag you down it really depends on the makeup of the group. "Well...I guess we could bring him along and see what Hopper says, although I don't think he'll be happy about the kid having a gun." Nancy replies, turning and walking back the way she came. Steve

quickly turns to me and ask "How about it then?" I holster my revolver and nod. Steve stares at me for a moment, then shrugs and starts walking off after Nancy. I follow only a few paces behind.

We walk for over half an hour, further and further away from where the demodogs attacked us. Slowly, we pass through the forest, heading deeper and deeper into the dark, until, finally, I can see a vague outline of...something. As we get closer, the outline gets clearer and I begin to see that it is a small cabin. I see the small, glowing light on the front porch getting brighter and then dimmer; there's a man on the porch, smoking a cigarette and holding an assault rifle. As we approached the cabin, the man slowly rises out of the chair raising the assault rifle slightly. "Who's there?" The man called out to us, taking the cigarette out of his mouth and stamping it out, "It just us Hopper" Steve replied, "Well us and a kid we found alone, he was attacked by a demodog just as I arrived. Quite lucky that I turned arrived, to be honest, I thought we couldn't leave him behind.". The man, Hopper, looks me up and down, carefully studying me before grunting and replying "That's alright Steve, couldn't leave him out there alone." I'm just sixteen years old by my reckoning, but I look closer to thirteen. It's not a problem though, people are less likely to attack or kill a thirteen-year-old; it has got me out of a few tricky situations before. Hopper moves ahead of us and opens the door to the cabin, holding it open for us to enter. As I enter, several faces turn to stare at me as I enter. In the kitchen area was a woman, nearly forty by the looks of it, but had an air of someone much older. Next was another man, who seemed to be the same age as Steve, but had none of his confidence about him instead, he had seemed more focused on something else, staring off into the distance. Finally, there were the five kids, probably about my age if not younger, all in a circle staring directly at me. I made my way over to a free corner of the room and sat there, leaning into the corner as I surveyed the rest of the cabin, I didn't know if I could trust these people, but I knew I could defend myself if I need to. Then I saw it, one of the girls from the group of five moved, she stood up and walked to over to the middle-aged woman in the kitchen, as she walked I caught a glimpse of something just above her wrist. A small black tattoo with three numbers printed on it. 011. Kids don't have tattoos and I'm fairly certain it is illegal to give it to them. The girl seemed to catch me staring, cause she faced me, meeting my gaze

and holding it. I turned away, not wanting to offend the girl, something about her was...unsettling.

Suddenly there were several howls outside the cabin and Hopper burst in yelling "Joyce we have a pack of demodogs outside, take the kids into the bedroom." Quickly the middle-aged woman, Joyce, ran over the girl with the tattoo, Jane, and pulled her into the only other room in the place, a sort of bedroom it seems. The other four kids followed them in as well, while Nancy grabbed her rifle and aimed it at the door. Steve stood in front of the door to the bedroom, blocking anything from getting into the room. The other man stood up and pulled a revolver out of his trousers and thumbed back the hammer. I pulled out my own revolver and replaced the shell with another bullet from my pocket, quickly slamming the chamber back in and thumbing back the hammer. Hopper flicked his eyes over to me, but didn't say a word, he just slammed the door shut behind him and stood back, raising his assault rifle. More howling now as the pack got closer, must have followed me, Steve and Nancy when we came back. I couldn't tell how many there were, but I hoped it was only a few, any more and we would have a real problem; in large packs, the demodogs are nigh unstoppable as they can attack with such ferocity and incredibly quick. I stand up but stay in the corner of the room, from where I can see everywhere else inside the cabin, just in case the demodogs try to break in through any other route. Suddenly there is an eerie calm, not a sound, no rustling of trees as the wind blows nor the sound of footsteps approaching, hell not even the sound of my own breath. Then I realize I have been holding my breath in anticipation of what is about to happen, slowly I let out the breath I had been holding in. The wall next to me shattered. Splinters lacerated my skin. I feel to the floor, pain burning through my body and blood slowly pouring out. Through the hole in the wall, I saw a humanoid figure, bigger than any demodog I had ever seen.

It was looking at me, well I assumed it was, I couldn't make out any eyes for it too actually see with. Before the new daemon could move, everyone else seemed to suddenly spring to life; Hopper raised his gun and fired off a burst into the chest of the new daemon. It howled in pain and raised its arms to try and defend itself, but it didn't run; instead it charged at Hopper, closing the space between them quickly. Before it could pounce the man was there; he raised the

revolver and fired at point-blank range into the creature's head. The daemon stumbled back slightly, Hopper and the man kept firing into the daemon, pouring round after round into the daemon, forcing it back. Demodogs began to enter the cabin, following the larger daemon cautiously. I slowly pushed myself up, using the wall to support me as I stood. I raised my revolver and fired at the nearest demodog. The bullet missed by several inches; the demodog snapped its head in my direction, its face unraveling as it leaps at me. I raised the revolver just as demodog hit me, its maw swallowing my hand with the revolver. There was a muffled bang as I fired off the revolver inside the demodog, the back of it exploding outwards as the bullet passed through it; the demodog crashed into me, its limp body landing on me and knocking me back to the floor. In the cabin now, there was the large daemon and a few of the demodogs; Steve raised his bat and charged at one of the nearest demodogs, sending the demodog flying as he smacked it with the bat, tearing through the demodogs flesh.

As I lie on the floor, another demodog lept at me, and with my hand still stuck in the other demodog; suddenly the door to the bedroom flew open, and the girl with the tattoo was standing there, arm outstretched. Suddenly all the daemons stopped, not just the demodogs but also the large daemon as well; slowly they rise into the air, all their limbs outstretched to the maximum. Blood begins to trickle from the girl's nose, slowly dripping to the cabin's floor. She screams and the daemons explode into dust like their atoms are being torn apart; as they disappear the girl collapses in the doorway, passing out from the effort. Suddenly the pain sweeps over me as I pull my arm out of the jaw and I see that it is slashed straight to hell, blood beginning to pour freely from my arm. I begin to feel weak and attempt to stand, but stumble. Someone rushes to my side, grabbing my arm to steady myself. Suddenly I go limp, feeling the strength leave my body and see darkness creeping into my vision. I just make out Steve lowering me to the floor before darkness engulfs me.

2. The Promise

Summary for the Chapter:

Hopper and the gang talk about what to do next.

The Plan

I awake. My body hurts. Even just breathing. Slowly I turn my head, my vision blurry. A figure makes their way over to me, slowly kneeling down to reach my eye-level. It's one of the kids. "Here, drink this." He says, slowly lowering the glass to my lips. I drink it, greedily, not realising how thirsty I actually was. The boy pulls the glass back slowly, saying "Careful, you'll choke." I can feel the strength begin to return to my body, slowly I push myself up to rest on my arms. For the first time, I get a good look at them, seeing that both of my arms are covered in a mess of scars and make-shift bandages. Luckily, most of the damage was superficial, apart from my right arm, which is covered with bandages. Looking up, I can see sunlight coming through the hole in the wall of the cabin.

Slowly, I begin to lift myself off the ground, feeling my body complain as I do so. I look around the cabin, surveying the damage caused by the assault of last night. It is absolute chaos. Bits of wood and furniture are scattered everywhere. In the kitchen is the rest of kids, including the girl with the tattoo; she seems to be badly shaken, looking very pale. As I try to get to my feet, I almost stumble, feeling weak as I do. The boy grabs my arm, trying to stop me from falling. "Thanks" I mumble, feeling my strength begin to return gradually as I do so. Gently I shrug the boy's arm off, managing to stand by myself as I make my way towards what remains of the couch. I lower myself onto with care, feeling everything complain as I do so.

The hole in the cabin wall has been partly covered with pieces of wood, to try and keep the outside out. The front door opens and Hopper walks in, his assault rifle slung over his shoulder. He glances at me, before heading over to the bedroom and knocking on the door. Someone calls out and Hopper enters, shutting the door behind him. A couple of minutes pass before Hopper returns, Joyce in tow. He moves to the front door and shouts for someone to come in, before

turning back inside. Slowly the kids come from the kitchen, the group beginning to form. Nancy and Steve come through the front door, Steve saying "Johnathon is going to stay on watch outside." Hopper nods then gestures for everyone to gather around him. I stay where I'm seated, not feeling like I could actually manage to move closer. Hopper, seeing me and probably realising I'm not up to moving, moves the group closer to me instead.

"After what happened last night" Hopper starts, "It is clear that we need to move from this cabin, now it knows we're here." I sit very still, confused about what 'it' they were talking about. "I'm tired of hiding anyway," Steve says, looking directly at Hopper as he did so. Everyone started whispering among themselves, seemingly spelt about the idea. Hopper yelled, "Let's all quiet down for a second." Everyone else quieted down fairly quickly, everyone turning to face Hopper, who in turn was looking at me. "First, let us start with our friend over there." Now everyone is looking at me, waiting for me to say something. Feeling awkward I ask "Well...what exactly do you want to know?" looking at each of them in turn. "Let's start with your name and then we can make other introductions," Hopper replies, his eyes firmly locked on me. "Oh, well...erm...I'm Alex" I reply, feeling even more awkward now.

"Alright" Hopper answers, before raising a hand and gesturing to each member of the group, saying "Joyce, Mike, Lucas, Dustin, Max, Jane, Nancy, Steve and I'm Jim, but everyone calls me Hopper. Oh, and Johnathon is the one outside." With introductions over, all of the attention returns back to Hopper now. "It time that we move further away. I know that some of you want to go after the Mindslayer, but we can't. Not yet anyway, we to get a better idea of what is going on in Hawkins before we can make any moves." Hopper pause for a moment, letting what he said sink in before continuing, "So what I suggest is that we split into two groups, Joyce, Johnathon and the kids all move further away to a safe location. Me, Steve, Nancy, Jane and Alex all head towards Chicago. Jane said she knows people there who might be able to help us."

Soon, most of the cabin is packed away as everyone gets ready to head out. When it comes to time to leave, I am able to stand as my strength begins to return to me. I grab my bag and wait as everyone

begins to say their goodbyes to each other, sharing hugs and handshakes. Slowly the two groups begin to form, moving away from each other. I head outside, the rest of my group leaving soon after me. Hopper starts walking off into the woods, with the rest of the group following behind him. I bring up the rear of the group, keeping an eye out for anything following us. Step-by-step we make our way through the forest, an awkward silence falling over our group as we travel. A strange tension being present between people in the group, most of all between Nancy and Steve it seems. Neither of them making eye contact and avoiding looking in each other's direction.

After what about an hour of the uncomfortable silence, I pipe up saying "Not to bring the mood down but isn't Chicago outside the dark zone?" I ask, looking at each of the group, in turn, my eyes eventually resting on the back of Hopper's head. "Yes." Hopper replies bluntly, not bothering to turn around. "So doesn't that mean we'll have to get through the blockade?" I ask, starting to feel nervous at the prospect of trying to cross it. "Yep." Hopper responds, again not bothering to turn around to answer. "Ok, what's the plan then? Cause, it is not like they're going to allow us to just waltz through." I query, still focusing on the back of Hopper's head, willing him to turn around and answer the damn question. "Don't worry," Hopper replies, waving his hand as he does, "I share it when we get there, I'm still working out the finer points." And with that, he moves further ahead, making it clear that the conversation is over.

We reach the blockade just as dusk begins to settle, the sun slowly giving way to a full moon, lighting up the surroundings with an eerie pale glow. We stop a couple of hundred metres away from the blockade, hidden in a couple of bushes. Between us and the blockade, lies open ground, since all the cover was removed to prevent people from sneaking up. If we do this, it will have to be a mad dash to the line, hoping that we aren't spotted by guards or spotlights. Not to mention the guard dogs patrolling the area as well. In short, Hopper is going to need a hell of a plan to get us through it. We sit in the darkness, waiting for Hopper to share his plan for getting past the line, slowly counting the seconds away. Finally, Hopper turns to face us, saying "Here's the plan. In five minutes there'll be a guard change and the guards will be distracted for a couple minutes. We can use that to sneak closer up to the line, once there it should be smooth

sailing. Cut through the fence, and just pass through to the other side."

It was easier to get through the line than I thought it would be, but then again, Jane's power did make it a whole lot easier. While the guards were distracted with their shift change we were able to sneak up to the line, with Jane able to move stuff, shifting their attention to the opposite direction of us. Once we reached the fence, Hopper pulled out a pair of wire cutters and quickly opening a gap in the fence for us to go through. We scurried through the gap, Hopper closing it behind us with cable ties, as long as no one looked too closely it would still be there when we got back. We dashed from shadow to shadow until we reached the field on the other side of the road. Once we were a couple of hundred metres away from the blockade, Hopper turned to us and said: "Right then, Chicago."